

/10 cont. /

000 inhabitants, its born owners, the patá-muná and the tarenó, as they themselves call themselves.

Without the Indians this region would be beautiful no doubt; but silent, cold, and unattractive: without a language to give a name to the rivers, lakes, hills and mountains; without feet to trace the pathways and seek the fords in the rivers and the passes in the sierras and the footpaths joining one settlement with another; without imagination to populate these places with fabulous and legendary beings and to explain poetically the great natural phenomena; without heart and without tenderness to welcome in its huts travelers and visitors; and without arms to master and tame the forces of wild nature.

181 For this is what the Indians who people these parts have been and still are: literati in their fashion, who create tales, legends, and fabulous beings not just with vivid and childlike imagination, but also with a comic cast and an implicit moral; geographers, who know the relief of their land to its tiniest detail; naturalists, who call by their proper names the infinity of beings that make up the flora and fauna of their patria chica /"little homeland"/; engineers, who have traced with the sure compass of their instinct and the robust tread of their feet routes to the four cardinal points among precipices and craggy mountains; and, finally, servants, and even faithful friends with broad shoulders and even more long-suffering and broad souls than those of all of us who have come to their land.

25. Against that evil proverb that says: "neither is the cassava bread, nor the Indian a person," it is necessary to assert, although it be a truism, that the individuals of the copper-colored race are just as much people as are others of the white, black, or yellow races.

• 829 Also widely circulated is the opinion that the Indians call the Creoles "rational ones," and that this is a sign that they themselves consider themselves to be irrational. In addition to there being in this a manifest logical contradiction, it has

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- 829 already been stated that the Indians call civilized persons, when they contrast them in general with themselves, te-pon-ken, or "man who has clothing," not "man who has reason."

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26. Setting this aside, just as, without destroying the unity of the human species, it is universally admitted that there is a division of the same into white, yellow, black, and copper-colored, according to certain /11/ more apparent somatic differences, so, also, without disrespect for the specific unity of the human soul, we must admit a diversity of mentalities, psychologies, aptitudes. And although we customarily say that the soul has neither sex, age, nor color, we nonetheless speak of feminine psychology, infantile psychology, native mentality, etc.

Could we, then, have a native soul, a copper-colored soul? -- There would be no difficulty in admitting this in the nonheterodoxical sense of the expression.

27. From what has been expounded in the foregoing, we can logically infer two conclusions or incontrovertible principles, which for some will be two more truisms of my father and my lord, to wit:

That the Indians have their own rational soul with all that which this word includes of faculties, tendencies, and aptitudes.

That this rational soul is of another mentality, psychology, tendencies, aptitudes, etc., principally because of the environment in which they live and their atavistic heritage.

All of us who write about native matters must keep these two principles ever before us so as not to put all feet in a single slipper nor to measure all races by the single European canon.

Further, it does not suffice to know the Indians by their skin or by their material culture in order to go on from there to talk about everything relating to them, their character, their practices and customs, their intelligence, their idiosyncrasies, etc.

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829 81. Before putting an end to this brief study, I should advise that, by the natural law of retaliation, the Indians, acute
522 observers of our customs and very fond of humor, also make fun of our hygienic customs and of some of our foods, which are likewise repugnant to them. Thus, for example, pork, eggs, etc. They also laugh at our corrals and houses for domestic animals, which are not always sufficiently separated from the houses and which do not smell like a bed of roses. And of our country privies, I have heard from them an infinite number of satirical remarks very similar to the popular saying, "What is it that the rich gather up, which the poor throw away?" with reference to nasal secretions.

515 82. To poke fun at dirty persons -- for such a person is
532 never lacking among the Indians, as everywhere else -- who flee from bathing like a cat from water, and abhor cleanliness as the devil the cross, they have the story of the Indian kamotipán, that is to say, the one who had mushrooms and squash sprout all over him, like ears all over his body, so that they made a noise when he walked along, so that game and fish fled and he had to be submitted to a great scraping and bathing by frogs, after which he became a good fisher and hunter.

Chapter X

What Is There To Their Corpulence and Healthiness?

829 83. Exaggeration in the reports. 84. The legend of the golden age. 85. Endemic diseases. 86. Are they not perfect herbists? 87. Medicine and magic: curers and enchanters. 88. Charms. 89. An Egyptian charm and a Pemón one. 90. Spiritual religion and corporal medicine.

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829 /56 cont. /

121. On top of these and other theories, the Pemón Indians, who practice the couvade, themselves have explained to me the reason and extent. Therefore, as far as they are concerned, there is no doubt that the reason for this is the following. They say that: /five plates appear here/ /57/ a) "every alteration of the health of the father or of the mother, any work which might lead to tiredness, any fatigue or disturbance of the progenitors, etc., has repercussions on the newborn, who are a part of them." They believe, thus, in sympathetic influence, to which they suppose children to be extremely sensitive and which has repercussions on the child, as a part of a whole, from the parents.

122 Men as scientific as Alexis Carrel believe that there is some truth in this and thus there is an explanation of certain phenomena of telepathy, prescience, etc.

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776 b) The Pemón add to this another reason and this is that, according to them, the potorí or piá, each of them the engenderer of a definite species of animal and plant, on being cut down or destroyed, take vengeance on human sprouts or offspring. Another thing is that the mauarí and other spirits are bothered by certain actions of men, such as, for example, by the rolling of stones down hills, and then they also take vengeance on their little children, who are easier prey for their anger and their evil influences. This second cause is, thus, belief in the harmful influence of invisible spirits and of the progenitors and, for this reason, defenders of living beings, whoever they may be /sic/.

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784 It will suffice to transcribe a few precautions, among the very many taken down from their dictation, so that the two principles which have been stated may be quite clear:

1. A woman who is enceinte must not eat cassava which has been returned to the house from which it came, so that, when she gives birth the child may not turn back to the breast.

/64 cont. /

- 600 142. Peace to men of good will. 143. Cases and more cases.
144. A very significant story.

776 137. The Indians have the notion of Kanaima up to the marrow of their bones, and there is no reason, however convincing it be, capable of persuading them to the contrary. And when one wishes to convince them that there are no such Kanaimas, nor such things, and that it is all imagination and fear that they have, they propose so many cases and with such circumstances that they are capable of convincing anybody who is not really up on things.

When traveling along the road they see its footprints -- the Kanaima walks on tiptoe or on the heel so that its path may not be recognized --; just the other day an Indian who was in the field grabbed Kanaima and then his spine began to hurt; a certain Indian woman, going for water to the ravine, saw Kanaima and got sick; another man, while hunting, heard its whistles and its cries like those of a child; finally, the Indians in a certain village had to move their dwelling because of the abundance of Kanaimas, and those in another one killed two or three Kanaimas with machetes. Such conversations on this subject are the daily bread of the Indians.

776 138. And although their ideas on this matter may not be
829 very unanimous nor very logical, in general they state the following:

That the Kanaimas are Pichaukok Indians; they are not mythological beings or demons, but Indians of another, pre-existent race in these regions.

That the Kanaima are many; that toward the Venamo, Iru-tepui, Kama, etc. -- more remote and uninhabited regions -- they live in stone houses or under stones.

That the Kanaima generally does not attack Indians when there are several of them but when meeting someone alone who is straggling behind.

829 /64 cont. /

776 That the Kanaima customarily hides behind some tree, which is at the side of the road; that he first attacks by lashing at the eyes or entangling them with vines; that then he falls on his victim with sticks; and finally he blows (a magical blowing) on his head and on his feet so that he'll get sick.

776 That ordinarily the Indians do not die at the hands of the Kanaima, but several days later; and that they must neither /two plates appear here/ /65/ say that they looked on Kanaima nor that Kanaima caught them, but that they saw a tiger or that they tripped over a stick, etc., until such time as the danger may pass, because otherwise they might get even sicker.

That the cry of the Kanaima (let us say the war cry) when he attacks with other companions is "Sové!" or "Soé!"

That for no reason and never does the Kanaima attack those who are not Indians.

139. They also say, endowing the Kanaima with magic properties, that he sometimes converts himself into a fox and goes to dig in the graves of Indians killed by him; and that at other times he converts himself into Auoineripué, a legendary being who drinks the liquid of decomposing corpses, which is his kachirí and with which he becomes mad.

Finally, that the Kanaima does these evil things to Indians for revenge, since they expelled them from their land, and from envy, since they are poorer in belongings than the Indians themselves.

776 And thus we have in conclusion that the Kanaima is the
781 bogeyman and more than the bogeyman of all the Indians; a
756 sort of persecution mania, which has taken over their weak minds; an almost incurable illness, since they believe that there is no possible remedy for anyone who has been caught by Kanaima and that there is no other recourse than to get into the hammock to die, if there is no enchanter who can come to cure him with stronger blowings than those of the Kanaima.

776 And, on the other hand, if there were no Kanaimas, the
761 Indians would be immortal or slightly less than this, since there is scarcely a death that they do not attribute to Kanaima.

/12 cont. /

43/ it with gifts, serenely ask: What other thing can and must we
577 poor people do but beg? What should dry earth do but sit up
[123] and open its mouth in demand for water?

57/ Nor will anyone deny that splendid and generous people
are rare; and in the face of this undeniable fact of miserliness,
there is no other remedy than to be beggarly. "A stubborn
poor person extracts a crumb of bread." For this reason also
the natives often endure punishment and maltreatment, which
they did not go looking for (where they beat them they remain)
and they go away when they have received their pay, because
this is precisely what they came looking for and what they have
been working for. And we would be presumptuous in the ex-
treme if, because we pay the Indians, we should want to keep
them indefinitely at our side and in our service.

600 156. Wisely did Father Eulogio warn that "the uncivilized
Indian does not show gratitude in any way," and this is due to
ignorance of our ways of life, our industries, and our business
ways.

829 Another missionary, Father Baltasar de Matallana, also
171 says that such Indians "believe that shotguns loaded with shot
and powder rained down from heaven on us." Another humorist,
an explorer of mines in all the Guianas, assured me that the
natives imagined that we were born with money in our pockets,
just as they were born with lice in their hair and fleas on their
feet.

829 And that is why it turned out to be unproductive, when we
123 brought Indians to Caracas, to take them to the shops and ware-
houses, since they couldn't understand why, out of so many
pieces of cloth, so many ready-made clothes exposed to their
avid glances, so many dozens of suitcases, axes, and other
tools, not a single meter was ever cut off for them, that no-
body ever gave them a garment, nor let them take away what,
apparently, was more than enough for the others.

538 157. The old Indians also have the legendary belief that
829 their ancient predecessors, the Makunaimá, extremely able,

/72 cont./

538 ingenious, and industrious, sent them in an airplane all good
● 829 things, but that we, the Venezuelans, don't give them to them
and keep them for ourselves. And thus it can be seen quite
clearly that, far from thanking us for what we do give them,
it is we who should be thankful and obligated because they
spare our lives. /Plate appears here./ /73/

797 Another reason why the Indians sometimes are not grateful,
829 as they should be, for gifts and personal sacrifices by the
missionaries, is the propaganda, already widespread, already
begun by the Creoles established among them. These latter
frequently try to deceive them, saying to them, for example,
that the Government is sending them many things, but that we
are appropriating them for ourselves.

But the truth of the case is precisely the opposite; that is,
that the governmental allotments do not even cover the per-
sonal expenses of the missionaries, much less provide for mak-
ing gifts to the poor Indians. In any case, they are ignorant
of this; and thus, because of the ignorance of some and the
envy of others, this legend of the magnificent and generous
government is a twin sister of the aforesaid one of the Makunaimá;
and the final result is the repellent ingratitude, only attenuated
by the lack of knowledge at the bottom of things. But, how-
ever, if Creoles who know how to read and writers who know
how to write, who can get their information from the Gaceta
Oficial /Official Gazette/ and the annual Memoir of the
Ministry of Interior Relations of the laughable quantities allotted
for the missions, are ignorant or pretend to be ignorant of
these things and therefore want to deny our personal sacrifices
and our work for our country, is it strange that the Indians are
ignorant of the truth and without blame?

431 158. It can well be said that gifts among the Indians do
437 not exist; everything among them is purchase-sale or lending.
"If you give to those who give to you, what fun is there in it?
Do the gentiles not perhaps do this?"

/94 cont. /

interrogators, together with the majority of those who discuss it, understand that within the word religion are included these three things: beliefs or dogmas, morality or precepts, and worship or prayers, sacrifices, etc.

204. For a long time there circulated very validly through the lands of America the humoristic saying that the Indians did not have "Dios, ni fe, ni ley, ni rey /God, nor faith, nor law, nor king/." This saying, in addition to being a mnemonic device for remembering the consonants which native languages are apt to lack, also included a satirical intent and meant to say that Indians in general lacked religious organization (God and faith) and social organization (King and Law).

In conversations upon this very subject more than once I have heard it said, making a clever play on words, that the Indians are godless /"los indios son los-sin-Dios/.

77/ 205. In the previous chapter we categorically rejected
● 129 this statement and we saw, especially, that the proof that the Indians didn't know how to answer whether or not they had any religion nor how to define or explain it is of no value in this matter, since these are theoretical questions for theorists.

To answer directly the question under study there exist two obvious and simplistic answers:

778 a) The negative one, which consists of saying: That the
782 Indians do not have idols or images, nor sacred places or buildings, nor offerings or sacrifices, nor persons consecrated to religion.

77/ b) The positive one, which runs on a par with the former one and is, like it, simplistic (and into which I confess to having fallen at times through a fondness for synthesis and brevity and through trying to make myself understood by those who are not very versed in these matters), which consists of saying: That /95/ Indians believe in the devil (ancient thesis) or that they are animists (modern thesis).

Vital Statistics

163 I was able to obtain reasonably reliable information on the families of 19 women. They had had 79 children, an average of about 4 per woman, and of these 46 were living and 33 dead. Most of these women were still bearing children, so that the average number of children per woman must be higher.

[165] Only 3 women for whom reliable information was available could be considered as definitely past child-bearing — a significant fact in itself as showing how few women survive this period. These 3 had had 21 children, or an average of 7 apiece, which is probably somewhat above the tribal average as these women lived longer than most do. The average number of children per woman who reaches maturity may be estimated at about 5, or possibly a little more.

165 Over 40% of the children born to women now living are already dead. Practically all of them died before reaching maturity. As many of the surviving children are still young infants, it is certain that many of them will die before they are mature. Of the 21 children born to the 3 women past child-bearing, 14 are dead, 67%. From these figures it is reasonable to estimate that 50% of the children born into this tribe die before reaching maturity.

162 Of the 46 living children involved in this tabulation, 25 are males and 21 females. Definite information as to sex could be obtained for only 20 of the 33 dead children and these included 9 males and 11 females. These figures do not demonstrate any probable departure from a sex ratio of approximately 1:1 or any correlation of infant mortality with sex.

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163 In all 23 females were personally recorded in detail and about 25 more were observed or were recorded from information given by husbands or other close relatives. These include all ages from birth to senility and it is significant that only two women were observed who were definitely mature sexually and who had not had any children. One of these, although sexually mature, was very young and not considered marriageable. The other was having her first pregnancy. It can thus be concluded that essentially 100% of the females who reach maturity are fertile and do have children. There is, on the other hand, a considerable group of young men who are sexually mature and are as old as women who have children but who are not married and disclaim having any children, an inevitable result in a polygamous society and one of which the significance will be discussed later.

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[165] No Kamarakoto knows his own age or the ages of his children and it is impossible to estimate these more closely than within 10 to 20%. There are, however, extremely few members of the tribe who can be called old. Certainly not more than 15% of the mature women are past child-bearing, probably not over 10%, and it can be roughly estimated that probably not more than 20 people in the tribe are over 45 years of age. We encountered and heard of none whose age could reasonably be estimated at more than about 60. The tribe thus

551/179 Practically all of the adult men of this group have such names. Small children ordinarily do not and a few young men or adolescents do not. Of 23 females recorded in detail, only 6 lacked Spanish names and 4 of these were young girls. On the other hand, as far as noted, none of the allied Indians from outside the central group have Spanish names. The Indians without Spanish names at first maintained, without exception, that they had no names at all. Later, [123] when more intimate relationships were established, it was admitted that all do have Indian names, but even then all my informants absolutely refused to reveal what these were in any instance.¹⁰³ The Indians seldom address each other by name, rarely by a Spanish name and, as far as I could learn, never by a true Indian name unless in the utmost family privacy.

The reluctance of most Indians, and especially Caribs and Arawaks, to use or even to reveal their personal names, even among Indians and of course especially to foreigners, is well known. See for instance Koch-Grünberg (1923, Vol. III, pp. 140 seq.), who found this to be true among the Taurepánes. The feeling seems to be that this name is an essential part of the personality, the ego, which suffers when it is revealed, and that knowledge of it also confers power which may be used against the owner. The Kamarakotos certainly • [123] have this feeling to a high degree. Possibly in this case it is reenforced by the desire of the cacique to make his tribe appear as "civilized" as possible and I suspect that he prohibited the revelation of any Indian names. The usual reason given, however, for refusal to reveal an Indian name was that it would "hurt" the person named.

Caribs do ordinarily have nicknames, as opposed to personal names, which are also generally used only rarely and with care but which are at least [123] known to all members of the tribe. In conversation I heard Kamarakotos use words apparently of address, in some cases animal names, that I believe to be Indian nicknames, but I did not confirm this because to attempt to do so would [177] have destroyed their frankness in speaking before me. In fact what seems to have happened in the central group is that Spanish names are now used essentially [777] as nicknames or in substitution for Indian nicknames. Two or three Kamarakotos who had been in Venezuelan settlements claimed to have been baptized. [533] The cacique has given names to some of his people and others have received them as presents from travelers or have conferred them on themselves.¹⁰⁴ Some have only one Spanish name, but others use both given names and surnames. 551/553 The European system of hereditary surnames is quite foreign to any Indians and the surnames in use among the Kamarakotos are not really employed as such, a son does not take his father's surname nor does a wife take her husband's. In one case brother and sister did use the same surname, but she retained this and did not exchange or add her husband's when she married, nor did she give her or her husband's surname to their children. Brothers do not necessarily have the same surname, nor do father and son.

103, 104 [see footnotes on p. 319, category 116 - Analysis]